

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9-32 and 40-72 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 21, 22, 24 and 30 are amended, claims 40-72 are added, and claims 8 and 33-39 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement is filed concurrently herewith. It is requested that the Examiner consider the references listed on the PTO-1449 submitted with the IDS and return to Applicants' undersigned representative a copy of the signed and initialed PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of the references.

Claims 1-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,608,981 to Mae. The rejection of claims 8 and 33-39 is rendered moot in view of the cancellation of those claims. The rejection of the remaining claims is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Mae discloses an image forming device having a body 1 to which carrier units 41Y, 41M, 41C and 41BK and developing units 42Y, 42M, 42C and 42BK are individually and independently attachable and detachable (col. 6, lines 26-30 and FIG. 2). The objective of Mae is to provide an image forming apparatus with developing units and carrier units that are individually attachable to and detachable from the image forming apparatus body, that does not require a guide member for a developing unit of each image making unit and another guide member for a carrier unit of each image making unit (col. 1, lines 20-34).

Applicants respectfully submit that Mae fails to disclose or suggest an image forming apparatus, comprising, *inter alia*, a mainframe, a photoreceptor, an exposing unit that exposes a surface of the photoreceptor to form an electrostatic latent image, a developing unit that develops the electrostatic latent image by supplying a charged developer on the surface of the

photoreceptor having the electrostatic latent image formed thereon, and an evacuating unit that evacuates the developing unit from a moving path of the photoreceptor by moving the developing unit along a direction away from the photoreceptor during loading and unloading of the photoreceptor, wherein the photoreceptor is loadable in and unloadable from the mainframe separately from the developing unit, as recited in amended claim 1. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Mae fails to disclose or suggest all the features recited in claim 1, as well as all the features recited in claims 2-7, 9-32, 40 and 41, which depend from claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

With regard to new claims 42-72, Applicants respectfully submit that Mae and the art of record fail to disclose or suggest all the features recited in independent claim 42 including, *inter alia*, a mainframe, a photoreceptor, an exposing unit that exposes a surface of the photoreceptor to form an electrostatic latent image, a developing unit that develops the electrostatic latent image by supplying a charged developer on the surface of the photoreceptor having the electrostatic latent image formed thereon, wherein: (1) the photoreceptor is configured to be unloadable from the mainframe by moving the photoreceptor along a direction that is substantially perpendicular or exactly perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the photoreceptor, (2) the developing unit is configured to be unloadable from the mainframe by moving the developing unit along a direction that is substantially perpendicular or exactly perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the developing unit, (3) the photoreceptor and the developing unit are loadable in and unloadable from the mainframe independently of each other, (4) a belt that contact with the photoreceptor is provided in the mainframe, and (5) during unloading, the photoreceptor is moved from the mainframe along a direction that is towards the belt provided in the mainframe.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:MMI/hs

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Attachments:

Amendment Transmittal
Petition for Extension of Time
Information Disclosure Statement

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